

Before Reading:

- Preview the book on your own. You don't have to read the whole story, although it helps. Look through to determine the subject, major themes, any difficult words
- Ask the students what they already know about the subject of the book. For example, if reading Where the Wild Things Are ask the kids if they have ever gotten in trouble and got sent to their room, if they have ever imagined their own land, have they ever been exploring, and so on. Everyone doesn't have to share an answer to every question, this just gets them thinking.
- If you have identified any vocabulary in the story, ask about 2 or 3 important words now. For example, something like, "Has anyone ever heard the word rumpus? The boy in the story, Max, says 'Let the wild rumpus start!' What do you think a rumpus is? Is it a real word or a made up word?"

During Reading:

- Stop at several points in the story to have the kids summarize what they heard or ask questions. Don't stop at every single page, between 2 and 5 times is enough. If a question leads to a discussion, have someone remind the group where the story left off before you continue reading.
- Ask questions about the plot words and pictures asking questions with answers right in the text/pictures or questions that involve inferring are both great. Keep with the Where the Wild Things Are example, asking things like "How do you think Max feels when his mother calls him Wild Thing? How do you know he feels that way?" or "Can vines really grow from a bedroom story?"

After Reading:

- Have the group summarize what happened in the story. Who were the characters? What were they doing?
- Ask questions about the story. Some questions might be: "What happened to Max's room at the beginning of the story? Was it still the same at the end? Could any part of this story happen in real life? What was fantasy?" More general questions include: Do you know anyone who acts like [a character]? How do you act like [a character]? What do you know about [the setting]? How would you feel if [what happened in the story] happened to you? Why do you think [the character] did [a particular action]?
- Talk about any unknown words. Help them find out what the words mean by using the other words in the sentence and the pictures.
- Ask about author's purpose. Why did the author write the story? What did they want us to learn or get out of it?